

UNTO THE CHURCH

1 Thess 1:1; Acts 17.1-10



Church planted by Paul on 2nd missionary trip. Acts 15:40-18.

City of Thessalonica

Location: on Egnatian Way.

Appearance: built to look like amphitheater on slopes of the bay,

Population: predominantly Greek

Short time in Thessalonica. Left abruptly.

Acts 17:1-2

Thessalonica:

Commercial city

Originally Therma, at head of the Thermaic Gulf.

Renamed Thessalonica by Cassander after wife, sister of Alexander the Great.

Largest city and capital of Macedonian region.

Free city – had own constitution.

Governed by city fathers, rulers/politarchs.

Only one synagogue...Not many Jews; City fathers not allow Jews freedom of worship.

Political center & strategic center for spread of gospel

As his manner was: custom, habit. Plan:

- Go into synagogue
- Recognized as visiting rabbi.
- Speak--give gospel
- Followed out by seekers
- Lead souls to Christ.
- Disciple

Result: the rest of the story

- Jewish leaders jealous
- People stirred up
- Persecution

He went in unto them: Into Jewish synagogue to build bridge with Jews and God-fearing Gentiles

Three Sabbath days: first three weeks allowed to speak in synagogue.

Forbidden to speak

Rest of time ministering outside synagogue.

In Thessalonica longer than 3 weeks.

Ministry in Thessalonica:

- Church consisted mainly of Gentile converts (Acts 17:1-10)
- Well organized (1 Thess 5:12)
- Preached the Gospel (Acts 17:3-4)
- Philippian Christians supported him (Phil 4:16).
- Didn't take money from Thessalonians-- made (1 Thess 2:9).
- Misunderstood (1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:5; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12).

... reasoned with them ... Q and A. Used the scriptures as text and basis

Acts 17:3 Opening: expounding scriptures

Alleging: quoting Scripture to prove doctrine. To bring forward—quote as evidence.

Adam Clarke: His method:

1st. *He collected the scriptures that spoke of the Messiah.*

2nd. *He applied these to Jesus Christ*

Christ must needs have suffered-Proving and explaining that Messiah had to suffer, die, ...

Risen again from the dead; proof of the gospel.

Jesus, ... is Christ. Messiah.

Acts 17:4 ... some of them believed. Jesus was fulfillment of prophecy, promised Messiah, anointed one of Israel, Son of God.

Believed: put faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

Consorted: Military term. "We belong to this camp and bivouac."

Became convinced, joined up, avowed association with.

Devout Greeks: God-fearing Gentiles who were not under the rule of rabbis. Gentiles--proselytes to Jewish religion.

Taken stand against idolatry and immorality

Purposed to love and serve God.

Not circumcised – The religious lost.

And chief women not a few: important, prestigious women in community.

Acts 17:5 Moved with envy: Jewish leaders were jealous--to burn with zeal, fired up and boiling with envy, hatred, and anger.

Why jealous? Saw own people and large numbers of Gentiles turning from Jewish doctrines to embrace Christ.

Lewd: --bad natured, depraved, evil intent; annoying, cause pain and disease,

Baser sort: vulgar, lower class. Unemployed men who hung out in market place.

Hucksters, petty traffickers, retail dealers; idlers, loungers, low, mean, vulgar.

Company: caused public disturbance

Set all the city on an uproar: Started a riot.

Not able to prove point? Angry. Retaliate.

... uproar: threw whole city into confusion

Assaulted the house of Jason: Attacked, rushed at house of Jason.

Jason—convert and relative of Paul. Rom 16:21

and sought to bring them out: induce, drag like an animal out to the people
Plan--bring Paul and Silas before City Council for judgment and punishment

Acts 17:6 ...found them not. By time the crowd arrived, they had left.

... rulers of the city, Political leaders, town officers

Turned the world upside down ... Paul and Silas have set the world in confusion, and now they are here disturbing our city,

Impact of the gospel:

Acts 8:9-10 Philip—Samaria-Great Joy in that city.

Acts 9:35 Peter – Lyda and Saron- *..all that dwelt in Lyda and Saron ... turned to the Lord*

Acts 13 Antioch in Pisidia

44.....*almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.*

49 Word of the Lord published throughout the region

Acts 14:1 ... *great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.*

v.4 City divided.

Acts 14 Whole city of Lystra – shaken up when the impotent man was healed.

16:20... *These men, ... do exceedingly trouble our city,*

17:5 Thessalonica -- Set all the city in an uproar

17:6 *These that have turned the world upside down ...*

Common thread – whole cities were turned upside

Acts 17:7 Whom Jason hath received: Jason guilty harboring bad criminals.

... and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar... Treason! Disloyal citizens.

Claiming that their king is Jesus, not Caesar!

Who speaking and accusing?

Lewd fellows from market place.

Already had ax to grind with government.

Felt that Roman government done them wrong.

Now, become very loyal and law abiding citizens?

... saying That there is another king, one Jesus – Failure to show allegiance to Caesar punishable by death.

Acts 17:8 ... troubled: agitated, stirred up.

Acts 17:9 ... taken security of Jason: expression of court system. Jason post bail.

Acts 17:10... immediately sent away Paul and Silas

Timing

Gospel taken root.

Church founded.

Date: 48-52A.D; 20 years after ascension of Christ; Earliest of Paul's letters

Purpose: Many of them

- Young and immature in Lord.
- Deficient in knowledge of Word
- Lacking Christian experience.
- Poor

Paul's concern:

- They might backslide
- False teachers

- Will Timothy come back safely ... what kind of news bring?
- Can Timothy effectively minister to them?

Timothy returns and brings encouraging news

Reasons for this letter:

1. To deal with innuendos and accusations
2. Let everyone know how happy he is about good report of Timothy
3. Teach topics:
 - What happens to us when die?
 - Second coming of Christ.
4. To instruct new Christians

So What?

- Message: Gospel
- Approach: Straightforward – a plan.
- Result: Turned the world upside down